

REMARKS

By Office Action mailed January 26, 2004, pending claims 1, 20 and 26-36 stand rejected and pending claims 2-19 and 21-25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, reconsideration of which is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claims 26-36 have been cancelled. Claims 1-25 are now pending.

Double Patenting

Claims 1 and 20 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,515,173 (the “‘173 Patent”). To obviate this ground of rejection, a Terminal Disclaimer over the ‘173 Patent is submitted herewith.

Rejections of Claims 26-36

Claims 26-36 stand rejected for the reasons set forth on pages 2-6 of the present Office Action. Although Applicants respectively disagree with the Examiner’s conclusions, in order to expedite allowance of claims 1-25, Applicants have cancelled claims 26-36 without prejudice to the prosecution of the canceled subject matter in one or more related applications. Accordingly, this ground of rejection has been obviated.

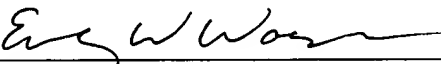
Application No. 09/908,969
Reply to Office Action mailed January 26, 2004

In view of the above amendment and remarks, allowance of claims 1-25 is respectfully requested. A good faith effort has been made to place this application in condition for allowance. However, should any further issue require attention prior to allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (206) 622-4900 to resolve the same. Furthermore, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure:
Terminal Disclaimer

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